

Rebuilding Spiritually

REBUILDING AND MATURING THE SPIRITUAL MAN

DEFENDING AGAINST SPIRITUAL ATTACK – POWER OF HIS MIGHT

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Scripture

- ▶ Nehemiah 4:6: So we built the wall and the whole wall was joined together to half its *height*, for the people had a mind to work.
- ▶ Nehemiah 4:7,8: Now when Sanballat, Tobiah, the Arabs, the Ammonites and the Ashdodites heard that the repair of the walls of Jerusalem went on, *and* that the breaches began to be closed, they were very angry. **8 All of them conspired together to come *and* fight against Jerusalem and to cause a disturbance in it. (NASB)**
- ▶ **Nehemiah 4:7,8:** But it came to pass, *that* when Sanballat, and Tobiah, and the Arabians, and the Ammonites, and the Ashdodites, heard that the walls of Jerusalem were made up, *and* that the breaches began to be stopped, then they were very wroth,
8 And conspired all of them together to come *and* to fight against Jerusalem, and to hinder it. (KJV)

How Does Satan Do This?

- ▶ **Discouragement** - to hinder, hold back, forbid, disallow, restrain, frustrate (Numbers 32:7)
- ▶ **Deception** – to lead aside from the right way; to be led away into error and sin
- ▶ **Distract/Disrupt/Delay** – To hinder or slow down progress, changing focus
- ▶ **Distort** – Distorting the Truth to confuse and mislead you and distorting your testimony to render you ineffective in your witness
- ▶ **Destroy** – to render useless; to cause one to lose eternal salvation
- ▶ **Divide** – Causing Dissension within a group (Romans 16:17; 1 Cor 3:3; 1 Cor 11:18)

A Good Offense is a Good Defense

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- ▶ **Determine** – Resolve to stay committed
- ▶ **Devote** – Devote your time and effort to the task (Luke 9:62)
- ▶ **Discipline** – Stay strong in the spiritual disciplines
 - ▶ Disciplines: prayer, fasting, worship, meditation of Word
- ▶ **Defend** (thought life, intercede, fortify your position, repair) – put on your prayer armor; cast down imaginations; (2 Cor 10:4; Ephesians 6:10-18)
- ▶ **Do (Doer of the Word)** – Trust in the validity of God's Word and the principles, obeying and doing the Word (James 1: 22-23; Proverbs 3:5,6)

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If you attack your opponents, they will be so busy fighting off your attack that they will not be able to attack you.

Nehemiah 4:7-10

But when Sanballat, Tobiah, the Arabians, Ammonites, and Ashdodites heard that the walls of Jerusalem were going up and that the breaches were being closed, they were very angry. 8 *And they all plotted together to come and fight against Jerusalem, to injure and cause confusion and failure in it.* 9 But because of them we made our prayer to our God and set a watch against them day and night. 10 And [the leaders of] Judah said, *The strength of the burden bearers is weakening,* and there is much rubbish;

Who were the burden bearers?

- ▶ **The strength of the laborers is failing:**
 - ▶ The half-way point (mentioned in Nehemiah 4:6) is a dangerous place
 - ▶ **These were individuals working on the walls and protecting the work**
 - ▶ Each assembly needs those who will go to their "prayer closet" to intercede and petition God for those who are "working on the wall."
 - ▶ Keep in mind: "Our prayers do not replace our actions; they make our actions effective for God's work." (Guzik)
 - ▶ **Then there's the rubbish** - The work of rebuilding the walls was not only construction, but cleaning as well
 - ▶ **Rubbish-filled lives hinder spiritual building of believer's lives**

Rubbish

- ▶ What do you do when you pray and pray and do what you know how to do and the rubbish just keep piling up?
 - ▶ As God does a work in us, a lot of rubbish has to be blown away and cleaned up – **Allow God to do the work**
- ▶ **Rubbish:** dry earth, dust, powder, ashes, earth, ground, mortar, rubbish
 - ▶ Part of our old sin nature, carnality, undesirable ways
- ▶ You know that the serpent had to eat “dirt”



It's Hard to Get Rid of Rubbish

- ▶ When it has become such a big part of your life that you don't want to part with it
 - ▶ “Well that's just the way I am. God made me this way
- ▶ There are also those who will defend any heap of rubbish, no matter how useless it is.
 - ▶ “Well, my grandfather had that pile of rubbish, and if it was good enough for him, it is good enough for us!”
 - ▶ Kinda like “Stinking Thinking” isn't it?



Scripture – Cleansing Ourselves

2 Corinthians 7:1 - Having therefore these promises, dearly beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God.

- ▶ **How Many of Us like “Spring Cleaning?”**
- ▶ There is a cleansing that God alone does in our lives, but there is also a cleansing which God wants to do in cooperation with us.
- ▶ **Filthiness of the flesh** - examples are drunkenness, fornication, adultery, and all such sins as are done immediately against the body. Although they take place in the flesh, it does have spiritual implications (generational sins, i.e.)
- ▶ **Filthiness of the spirit**- impure desires, unholy thoughts, and polluting imaginations that can lead to strongholds, oppression, and separation

Sins of the Spirit and Flesh

Our pride, our legalism, our self-focus, our self-righteousness, our bitterness, and our hatred can all be far worse to deal with than the more obvious sins of the flesh. “There is a defilement of the spirit which is independent of the defilement of the flesh. The spirit can be defiled in many ways. I sometimes think that the sins of the spirit are more deadly than the sins of the flesh.” (Morgan)

- ▶ *Note: There are many people who are willing to point out the rubbish around your life, but thank God for those who are willing to help you clean up the place.*

We are Not Able to Work on the Wall

- ▶ When Spiritual Fatigue and Discouragement sets in, the work of the Lord in you and through you is hindered
 - ▶ Before they could build the walls up, they had to tear down and clear away the rubbish
 - ▶ God is wanting to do a Greater work in you today, but there's still some "clearing up" to do
- ▶ **The Good News:**
 - ▶ **Isaiah 40:29 - He giveth power to the faint; and to them that have no might he increaseth strength.**

Scripture

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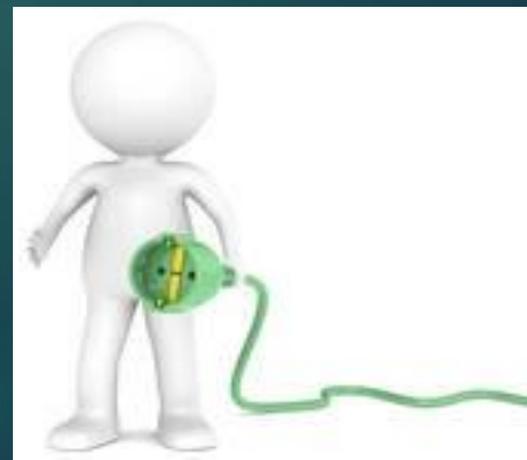
Ephesians 6:10 - Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might.

Ephesians 6:10 - In conclusion, be strong in the Lord **[be empowered through your union with Him]; **draw your strength** from Him [that strength which His boundless might provides].
(Amplified)**

- ▶ **Power comes through connection** – What are you connected to?
- ▶ To win in this spiritual battle, we must dismiss our might and take on “His” might

Our Dilemma

- ▶ *Many of us are not truly connected to anything*
- ▶ **Connection is usually associated with Commitment**
- ▶ **Some of us are connected to the wrong things, thus committed to the wrong things**
- ▶ **Power is not as effective without a Receptacle**
 - ▶ one that receives and contains something
 - ▶ an electrical (or electronic) fitting that is connected to a source of power and **equipped to receive**



To Win at War

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- ▶ **Know Your Enemy** – His tactics, soldiers (i.e. false prophets), his strength and abilities, uniform, and morale towards destroying you
 - ▶ 2nd Corinthians 2:11- Many Christians are “Disadvantaged” because they are ignorant of Satan’s devices – **Intelligence Reports:**
 - ▶ **Satan’s morale** – he is highly motivated in stealing, killing and destroying Christians (John 10:10)
 - ▶ **Area of Operations** – Strongholds, Occults, Culture, some churches
 - ▶ **Soldiers:** His invisible kingdom and hierarchy of evil; false prophets, and those who are submitted to him
 - ▶ **Strength** – He has no power over the believer except that we render to him; his greatest strength is in his deception



Good News! He Is Defeated

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Power of His Might

- ▶ Be strong in the Lord and in the power of His might:
 - ▶ Literally, **Paul is saying strengthen yourselves in the Lord** just as David *strengthened (encouraged) himself in the LORD his God* in 1st Samuel 30:6
 - ▶ Paul also says to be strengthened with His might (power) through His Spirit in the inner man (Ephesians 3:16)
- ▶ Might is inherent power or force. A muscular man's big muscles display his might, even if he doesn't use them. **It is the reserve of strength.**
- ▶ Power is the exercise of might. When a person lifts a heavy weight, it means that now the reserve of strength (his might) is actually in operation.

Points of Emphasis

- ▶ God has given us His Might just as Saul tried to give David his armor, yet many Christians do not exercise God's might or power
- ▶ Many turn their physical or emotional strength upon themselves or others, wrestling against flesh and blood
- ▶ Having power is no good unless it is exercised and one needs to exercise in order to maintain might
- ▶ God has vast reservoirs of might that can be realized as power in our Christian life. But His might does not work in us if we passively. His might works in us as we step out to do the work in total reliance upon His strength

Ways Many Believers Waste Their Spiritual Strength

- ▶ Over- commitment of Oneself to non-productive activities (Matthew 5:37)
- ▶ Too much conversation (**vain conversation, foolish talking, jesting**)-
Ephesians 5:4
- ▶ Arguments, debates, wrangling with one another (Galatians 5:15)
- ▶ Laziness
- ▶ Too much time in the wrong company (1st Corinthians 15:33)
- ▶ Improper love of money, career, seeking respect (1st Tim 6:10)
- ▶ An unequal yoking with an unbeliever (2nd Corinthians 6:14)
- ▶ Ungodly entertainment (Psalms 101:3,4; Psalms 16:8)
- ▶ A wrong attitude toward or doubting the Word of God (James 1:6,7)

Strength Through Dependency

- ▶ **You are in a spiritual battle.** If you are ignorant or ignore that fact, you probably aren't winning the battle. We are combatting the wiles, schemes, and tactics of the devil
- ▶ The fact that our real battle is not against flesh and blood is lost on many Christians, who put all their efforts in that direction.
- ▶ Paul's idea here is much the same as in 2nd Corinthians 10:3,4: *For though we walk in the flesh, we do not war according to the flesh. For the weapons of our warfare are not carnal but mighty in God for pulling down strongholds.*

